

# LOWELL OFFERING.

DECEMBER, 1845.

## THE WINDOW DARKENED.

I HAD a lovely view from my window, but it was not of a level landscape, nor a group of towering hills; it was neither city nor country exclusively, but a combination of both. I looked from the central street of a city across a narrow strip of vacant land, divided by a quiet stream, to a slope, covered with the residences of those who prefer the comparative stillness of the suburb to the bustle of the heart of a city.

It was like a beautiful picture—that glittering panorama—when the sunshine flashed back from the whitened dwellings, as they rose one above another upon the green amphitheatre—the mansions more distinct and more splendid as they approached the summit of the hill, and but two or three magnificent dwellings graced like a radiant crown its verdant brow. Yes, it was beautiful in the glorious sunlight, when countless windows flashed forth a diamond radiance, but just as lovely, though more subdued in the influence of its charms, in the gray twilight, or at eve, or moonlit night.

I have watched the footsteps of Night, as she crept slowly up the hill, her dark shadow falling before her, until the roof-tree of the highest mansion lay hid beneath her shroud. And then the moon, like a gentle conqueror, stole placidly above the brightening horizon, and Night awoke to smiles and peace. She lifted her shroud from the fair earth, and a gentle day had dawned upon the world. Another day—yes, for that was no time to sleep—it was no night—while so soft, so exquisite a brilliance bathed that congregated mass of life and beauty.

My window!—it was my only constant companion. It told me of sunshine and of storm; it heralded the morn, and warned me of the waning light of day. It gave me, gratis, a ticket to that picture gallery, where my eye wandered on an involuntary, though oft-repeated, tour of pleasure.

My window!—it has taught me much in quiet pantomime; and its lessons did not weary, for they were ever varying, and ever new.

My window!—it gave me light for constant occupations—it gave me daily bread with the pleasure and instruction which it afforded me, and *my window was to be darkened.*

I have alluded to the narrow waste beyond the stream. My window told me that there was to be laid the foundation of a mighty structure. It

was a sad tale to hear, but, as if to make amends, my window each day exhibited an active, bustling and novel scene, such as it had not shown me before. There were shouting crowds of men, digging deep the trenches for the foundation stones, and boats came up the monotonous stream with the solid granite for their freight. This continued so long that I almost wearied of my window's show; yet its sameness was sometimes varied. Once a heavily laden wagon rolled backward into a newly excavated pit. I witnessed the struggles of the noble horses as they strove to resist the impetus which the vehicle gathered while descending the slope, and when that was gone there was a moment of frenzied strength as they endeavored to scramble from the crumbling earth, while their despairing efforts but hastened their destruction. I held my breath as they hung for a moment between life and death, and then *they were gone*. True, they were but beasts; but life was now extinct with those who had enjoyed it, while I knew of those who but bore it patiently, as a burden of which Death might kindly relieve them. But the horses—there was a useless running and shouting when they fell—crowds gathered around the pit, and gazed for awhile into its depths—then, if I rightly understood my window, spades were brought, and it was made a grave.

Such were the incidents which varied the monotony of my window scene, but after a time this was over, and the walls were commenced. Now boats came up the stream laden with brick, and huge red piles arose upon its banks. The red walls arose—*red*, the color of the conqueror—and they proclaimed a victory over my pleasures. With one story of the great fabric was screened from me whole streets of pleasant dwellings. The early sunrise was gone—the blush of morn—those brilliant clouds, the orphans of departed Night, and happy wards of coming day. The first soft glance of moonlight was forever hid, and it seemed as though my best treasures were taken from me. But I clung more fervently to those which were left, and the more tenaciously as I saw them departing. This beautiful dwelling, and that majestic tree, were never to me so lovely as when they were shut from my window's view. Then I began to measure with my eye the scene, and to calculate how long I should retain this or that beauty, and what might remain at the last. The church spire—that I should always have—and those highest houses, and the brow of the hill. But no! I had not calculated wisely. They began to recede from me—for the huge building rose still higher and higher. Men walked around the scaffoldings, as of old they patrolled the ramparts of some giant castle, and at night the unfinished walls, relieved against the dark sky, might well remind a reader of romance of the descriptions of ancient chateaux, with their high massive turreted walls.

Higher, higher still, arose the fabric. The mansions were gone—the church—the brow of the hill—and at last the very tip of the spire was taken from me. Oh! how was my window darkened!—but not quite dark, for there still was light from the skies above.

And thus, methought, it is in life. We look, with the eye of youth, through Hope's magical window, upon a fair world. Earth lies like a glorious panorama before us. Our own path leads on at first like the crowded street, amidst the hum of business, but it soon stretches forward to the place where lie combined the pleasures and leisure of the country. Yes, our anticipated life seems like that brilliant amphitheatre, crowded and exciting at first, but more quiet, more imposing and beautiful, as we



look upward. The minor details of the scenery are not carefully scanned. We look not at the narrow dusty paths through which we must thread our way, nor at the stones against which we may often dash our feet, nor the intruders who will dispute our way. We consider not that we may falter, or faint, or die; and there is always at the top of the hill some mansion which is to us the temple of riches, fame and pleasure. But while we look upon the scene, it sinks from our view. The stern realities of life rise before us like the brick-built wall, and we see the prose where we have before but witnessed the poetry of this world's scenes.

We know that some of our pleasures are passing away—that our window is darkening—but we think that the tallest trees, the highest mansions, the summit of the hill, will yet be left. But sterner and higher still arises the wall before us. One hope after another is gone—one pleasure after another has been taken away—one image after another, that has been beautiful to our eye, and dear to our heart, has forever disappeared. The church-spire, with its heaven-pointing finger, symbolical of the outward ordinances of religion, leaves us last. But finally it has been taken, and we must turn to whatever temple we may have prepared within.

How has the scene changed! How is our window darkened! Yet we grope not in utter darkness, for there still is light from the heavens above. We are subdued—with hearts rightly attuned not miserable. We look forward less, but upward more. We are more peaceful, if less joyful; and we transfer the bright pictures, which the window has Daguerreotyped upon our memories, to another and more enduring world. We think that had the wall been still higher—had it encircled us yet more closely, there would still have been light above; and, unless Heaven itself is shut from our view, there will be bright starbeams, and calm moonlight, and blessed sunshine, coming down, and struggling towards us through the *darkened window*.  
ELLA.

## AUTUMN WINDS.

AUTUMN winds, who sigh around us,  
Tell us "beauty must decay,"  
Youth must vanish, age o'ertake us,  
And we all must pass away.

But, like winter, death's pale emblem  
Must give place to sunny spring,  
Who then from earth's secret chambers,  
All her flowers and sweets will bring.

So this clay, the part immortal,  
Must give up, when life is o'er;  
Then 't will fly through death's dark portal,  
To an ever-blooming shore,

Where no winds the flowers will wither,  
Where no frosts the leaves will sere;  
But they 'll bloom, and bloom forever,  
Through a long eternal year.

MARA.

## THE PARING (OR APPLE) BEE.

No portion of my life is imprinted so indelibly on Memory's tablet, as the early part of my girlhood, which was spent in the country, yet to sit down and write about the rusticity of those with whom one has been associated, seems to be a delicate task, as well as a pleasant one. Delicate—not because we are apprehensive old friends will recognize the author—in this respect we are unshackled and unapproachable while we withhold real names, and disguise our own good little selves by adopting such signatures as suit our taste—but we fear some nice reader, who has never lived in the country, may regard our humble effort with other feelings than approbation, and say, "I wonder the girls can't find something better to write about. It is decidedly out of place to tell such stories."

Our large, "almost *very* large," approbateness, gives us an irrepressible, and perhaps an inexcusable desire to cultivate good feelings and win pretty speeches from all the "pretty speakers." Indeed, they would be to my soul what the "emblem of truth" was to the thirsty children of Israel, when the great magician smote the rock in the wilderness. But my vocation is, to tell of country life in an unvarnished way, and also to present the most prominent features of rusticity. It sounds fine, and is certainly fashionable, to describe the home of affluence, and the appurtenances thereof, but to give a true picture of country life, one must "let himself go" naturally and without restraint, and talk of cheese-tubs, churns, goose-pens, duck-puddles, tobacco-trenchers and cat-holes. This apologetic commencement may seem superfluous to some, yet I trust I shall find sympathy with the benevolent.

The town in which I spent so many girlhood days, was a famous one for frolicking, or rather the folks who lived in it were so. Old and young, church-members and all, partook largely of the spirit of agrarianism and hilarity. We used to have sewing parties, tea parties, candy parties, sugar-camp parties in the wood, parties for cracking nuts and parching corn, huskings, quilting matches and spinning frolics. It was customary for some girl to give a party the evening after general muster, and also on town-meeting-day evening, which is the second Tuesday in March. These parties were "prime," for the boys would come with their pockets stuffed full of gingerbread and peppermints, and they were usually more lively at such times. We had prime sleigh-rides in the winter, and also sled-rides, which were equally good, for what they lacked in comfort, they made up in spirit fourfold. Perhaps you would like to know in what manner we enjoyed these. In the neighborhood there were ever boys, girls and hand-sleds in abundance, and every lady knows there are hills enough in New-Hampshire, and snow on them in the winter; so when there came a bright moonlight evening, we assembled ourselves together, and hied for some favorite hill, where sled-riding could be performed without horse-power or steam. In going to the place the boys would haul the girls on the sled, but we could all ride down hill, and then the boys would drag the sleds to the top again, and lead the girls by the hand, lest we should slip. There is a world of innate gallantry in the young country chaps.

Our spinning frolics usually took place in May, because then the days are long, and it was the time when we were in a post-haste hurry to get



the "sail cloth" done for market, so as to have our bonnets and white frocks made up by the first of July, or before. The paraphernalia for our spring attire was the proceeds of butter, eggs, and the socks we had knit through the winter, but we had to make tow and linen cloth to purchase our white dresses and summer bonnets. These spinning frolics differed materially in one respect from other merry-making scenes, and it was in not having males and females according to the laws of Eden. We used to dine early, so as to be on hand to begin work as soon as one o'clock. The wheels were brought together before dinner time, and every operator commenced at the same moment, and "spun like sixty," to see which could get her stint off first. I was a terrible spider for spinning in those days. However, I have been outdone at these times, but I don't know that I ever felt the vindictive spirit manifested by Minerva, the reputed inventor of the distaff, when Arachne, a lady of Lydia, offered her a challenge in the art of spinning. Indeed, I never smote a competitor "on the forehead with a spoke of the wheel," nor did I ever wish for the transforming power ascribed to the heathen deities, that I might turn her into a spider, that eternal spinner, as Minerva served poor Arachne. Good nice little me! After we had done our stints, which was a "maid's stint" for a day's work, we used to unband our wheels and clean up, and then take tea amidst the dulcet tones of laughter, the tinkling of little teaspoons, and a host of custard pies. After we had done justice to the good things on the table, we usually turned up cups, and told each other's fortunes therefrom, and then went to walk and pick flowers, while the setting sun was painting with ruby and gold the forest scenery around us.

I have headed my story with *The Paring Bee*, but I have wandered a mile from my original intention, so I will begin now at the beginning, and hurry along with it, for I expect to get very tired before I come to the end.

When we were about to have a paring bee, we sent out our invitations a day or two previous, and this was the first step. Then came the righting up of things in the parlor, where the dancing and playing plays would take place; and after this we had to make pumpkin pies enough to fill both of the huge rotary wheels in the dairy, and those we could not set on the wheels for the want of room, we used to set on the stone flooring beneath, the shelves being filled with pans of milk and cream tubs. Then we had to make about two bushels of doughnuts. Pumpkin pie, doughnuts and cheese was the usual treat for paring bees. The apples were to be picked from the heaps in the orchard, and before the night came the kitchen had to be cleared of every thing but chairs, and filled with such things as cheese tubs, wash tubs, kneading troughs, baskets, pans, churns, buckets, tin pails and a "beggarly account of old boxes," to hold the apples to begin upon. We generally commenced work about dark, and worked till ten o'clock "for life," while our tongues kept pace with our nimble fingers, and sometimes out-stripped them.

Two big boys in the neighborhood had machines by which they pared the apples with amazing despatch. These "labor-saving" operators took their stations in the middle of the long kitchen, and the rest of us filed on each way—first a boy, then a girl, till our line reached the opposite extremities of the room. First and second platoon the lines were called. There were others who waited and tended upon us, picking apples from the boxes for the machines, changing our pans, and so on. Stringing and hanging the apples over head, in good festoon order, was done by those

out of the platoon ranks. When the old house-clock struck ten, we cleared away in short order, and the tables were brought in and loaded with pumpkin pies, doughnuts, cheese, "hard cider" and tea.

After the repast was over, dancing commenced in the parlor, "tough and tight." We never had a fiddler at such times, but we often had "Uncle Peter," aided by other voices, to sing for us, which was about as good. Dancing was generally commenced by a four-handed reel, to the tune of "Crazy Jane." Uncle Peter would sing the words of the song fast enough to keep our feet flying like drumsticks on the floor. At this time we had not heard of the "Imperial waltz, imported from the Rhine," nor had we been instructed in the intricate changes of cotillon dancing by the Stentorian voice of a dancing-master shouting forth "First lady cross over and chasse to the right," "Balance at the corners, and turn partners," "Lady's grand chain," "Gentlemen's grand chain," "Grand promenade," "Grand right and left," "All hands round," and so on, but we could dance sundry four-handed reels, as well as veteran country dances, such as "Chorus Jig," "French Tour," "Fisher's Hornpipe," "Rural Felicity," "Soldier's Joy," and others; also, an eight-handed reel, and an eight-handed "hooter," as the boys called it, to wind up with. This was danced to the tune of "The girl I left behind me," and it did really seem as though we should be "left behind" indeed by the way the boys set us a-flying when they swung us round at the last of it.

Midnight usually changed the scene for plays. Pledge, or "Button! button! who's got the button?" took the lead. Then followed "The little word," "The lawyer," "Drop the handkerchief," "The Juniper Tree," "Blind man's buff," &c.

"Green grow the rashes, O—  
Green grow the rashes, O;  
Choose your true love that's for to be!  
Come and stand by the side of me!"

When we were all in a ring, it was—

"Green grow the rashes, O—  
Green grow the rashes, O;  
Kiss him quick, and let him go!  
Never mind the mitten, O!"

"Whirl the [pewter] plate," was surprisingly popular among us. Why it was so, I never could tell, unless, forsooth, it was because that so much kissing could be exacted in the performance of it. It was nothing strange for a girl to be judged to go round and kiss every boy in the room; and each boy was especially careful that his part of the work was "done to order," "good custom work," and if a little extra finish was put in, it was all the better. Sometimes we had to measure off twenty or thirty yards of tape, and clip every yard. Sometimes we had to kiss ten times through the cheese tongs, or the back of a chair. And then there was the making of skillets, haycarts, wheelbarrows and all sorts of things, but the making of a "nest" for an animal we will not name to ears polite, was the cap-sheaf. This was done by turning a chair down on the floor, back up; then we had to get down on our elbows and knees, one on one side of the chair and the partner on the other; then poke our heads under the back of the chair till our faces were in kissing proximity, and then "fire away," as the boy said to the country schoolmaster, till it seemed as though our necks would break a-reaching.



There were other plays that I have forgotten, besides the play of "Being married," which was not done by jumping over the broomstick, as some suppose. We had several ways of bringing about the "mimic marriage," but the favorite one was to get a large number up in a ring by singing,

"We're all a-marching to Quebec," &c.

Then we formed ourselves into lines, like a country dance, while one by the magic of "make-believe," was metamorphosed into a priest to perform the nuptial ceremony. He (the priest, I mean,) stood at the head of the set and married the first couple by discoursing to them in this sublime manner:

"By the wind, and by the weather,  
These two have come together;  
By the trencher and the knife,  
I pronounce ye *man and wife*."

And so on till all were married, when we used to pair off home, especially happy, provided we got the right one to go with us. However, we were not very particular about having our husbands, for those connubial laws were not regarded as strictly obligatory by us.

I remember of once going to a paring bee where the old man who invited us, was the most niggardly of human beings to drill work out of any body that I ever knew. However, we were always on tiptoe for a start wherever frolicking was in view. We began work at the usual time and worked till ten, when the old fellow came into the room and asked us, very good-naturedly, to work a few minutes longer, as he had a few apples in the other room that he would be glad to have pared. We consented, of course. In came a basket of apples, which we cut; and then in came another basket; and then another, and another, till it seemed as though "the most last one" would never greet our view. Our hearts began to groan within us, and we gave evident symptoms of showing resentment, for we were working away the precious moments that should have been spent in dancing and playing. At length one waggish chap looked up to the old man, as he entered with a heaping basket of apples, and said, "Uncle Sam, when you get your apples all cut, fetch on your pumpkins and potatoes." Uncle Sam grinned all over his face, but little cared he for the witticisms cracked to his account, so long as they were no tariff on his income. However, there was an end to work, as there is to every thing in this mundane sphere, and then came the pumpkin pies, doughnuts and cheese, and the old man went out and shut the door behind him. There were only ten or a dozen pies, a joke to the number we could have devoured had they been decent; but, alas! the crusts would neither cut, break, bite or *bend*, so we scooped the pumpkin out and eat it, and then piled the crusts up like a pile of plates, and set them on the dresser. But I have not told you about the cheese. This was a real "white oaker"—though, instead of settling together solid, it had taken a strange fancy for puffing up, till it was most as round as a ball before being severed, and remarkably white, consequently we called it a white swelling. We toasted this and strung it round on nails and the backs of chairs, which was capital sport. When we had danced and played "like spirits" two or three hours, the boys knocked holes in the bottoms of the flinty pie-crusts, and hung them on the huge crane in the fire-place to dry. We were now ready to go home.

M. R. G.

## IDLE WISHES.

Oh, for the pleasant days of yore,  
When life was not all real,  
And gracefully fair Nature wore  
The veil of the ideal!  
When merry Zephyr, light of foot,  
Ran through the woodpaths singing,  
And from the haunted sea, the note  
Of Triton's horn was ringing!

Forever from the glade has gone  
The blithe and playful fairy;  
Upon the sward by moonlight, none  
May watch her gambols airy.  
Long since was hushed the dryad's cry,  
To woodman's axe resounding:  
The naiads, when rude man came nigh,  
From all the streams went bounding.

And 't is no wonder they have sped;—  
The bright and happy creatures:  
For from their ancient haunts have fled,  
The old, endearing features.  
On fairy circle, madly broke,  
A factory's wheels are whirling.  
Oak of the dryad! see thy smoke  
From yon black engine curling!

Men laugh at Neptune's foaming rage,  
And call all dreams deceiving:  
The motto of the present age  
Is "seeing is believing."

Witches and wizards, long ago,  
Were scattered in confusion:  
A ghost, will any school-boy show  
An "optical illusion."

Both good and bad from earth are shorn  
By Time, the great oppressor;  
O, that I only had been born  
My grandame's predecessor!  
Then had I oft, in forests dim,  
Met pensive wood-nymphs roaming;  
Or heard the air-sprite's vesper hymn  
Borne softly through the gloaming.

And yet the pranks of witch and fay  
Wrought for our sires much trouble;  
Sure, 't were not right, for idle play,  
Their labors *now* to double.  
'T is also said, these shapes went by  
Ere Truth her bright lamp lifted;  
As, in the dark, o'er childhood's eye  
Wild phantom forms are shifted.

Well, if with goblin and with sprite  
They will not *angels* banish;  
And if, with Fancy's flickering light  
Faith's glory may not vanish;  
Still let me feel the spirit's ken  
Soar far beyond earth's real;  
And I'll awhile content me then,  
Nor sigh for the ideal. L. L.

## SOLITUDE.

"But now, where shall we find a place  
For any spirit's dream?"

LOVELY Solitude! Sages have praised thee! Gifted tongues have sung of thee in their sweetest tones, and felt themselves honored by the theme. Yet, oh! accept the scanty oblation of an humble votary, the offering which a *factory girl* lays, fresh upheaved from her heart, upon thy shrine. And who, like the factory girl, can understand thy worth? The poets and philosophers of old might fly at once to thy inspiration-breathing groves, and in thy refreshing presence feel themselves "lapp'd in Elysium." But she who writes these lines, hath sought thee day and night, in vain. Hath she not chased thee from room to room, and as often as she hath for a moment caught a glimpse of thy charming features, hath not some invidious interloper chased *thee* yet farther away? O! to enjoy one short hour in the companionship of thee and thy sister, Silence!

And here have I found ye both. Here, upon the highest summit of—not the hill of the Muses, nor even a White or a Green Mountain, but of



*my boarding-house*—yea, in this long, deserted attic have I met thee at last. Here have I seated myself in thine august presence, and wait for thee to inspire my pen with

“Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.”

Stay! surely that *was not* the sound of smothered laughter, and the door-latch did *not* tremble;—oh, stay! one moment!—but I hear thy departing footsteps—the door bursts, and thou art gone! Oh, for a spell to exorcise intruders! \* \* \* \*

‘Why, Sally! where *have* you gone to? and what are you doing up in this lonesome place? Here’s Kate and I been running “up stairs and down stairs” after you. But—O my! you—you—Kate, *she’s writing composition!* Sha’n’t I give up now! The next thing we shall see will be our Sally’s name signed to all the poetry and verses in the paper. Kate! Kate! what shall *we* do to “get up in the world?”’

‘O, Jenny! don’t say any thing about “getting up” higher than this! Three pair-of-stairs is high enough, in all conscience! But you *aint* going to be a literary character, are you, cousin Sally? What do you think that respectable man, your father, Skipper Jedediah Simpkins, and that worthy woman, Mrs. Jemima Simpkins, would say? Well! by the time you get your name up, I’ll climb up the Frigid Zone and hang my bonnet on the North Pole. That’s what *I’ll* do!’

‘Ha! Kate! and I’ll go with you and tie my pocket-handkerchief to a stick, and put it above your bonnet, and then, “who shall be greatest?” O! I forgot!—my venerated cousin Sally, I came to ask you if I might go to the Temperance lecture with Kate and Mr. ——. Don’t blush so, Kate! Yes! I read permission in your face: it says, “Any where, only out of my way!”’ \* \* \* \*

Again the door has closed—the jargon ceased! Again I invoke thee, O Solitude! and thou appearest. I had thought to consecrate this lonely room as thy temple, where I might come secretly, as to an oracle! I had hoped that no foot save mine should desecrate its threshold. Hark! O! Aunt ‘Melia, is it you?

‘Law, yes! You see how I felt kind o’ lonesome like, and so I thought I’d take my knitting-work, and set down in your *chaamber* along with you a spell, ‘cause you know the other gals *aint* so kind o’ neighborly and sociable to old folks as you be. It’s all this ere new gownd, or that are new feller, and it seems just like Vanity Fair to me. But there—you’re a writin’, and I won’t bother you now.’

‘Never mind, Aunt ‘Melia, I can put it off.’

‘No, you sha’n’t *nuther!* You see I’m an old *womern*, and feel kind o’ lonesome, and jest like talkin’ to somebody after settin’ so still “pickin’ waste” all day. But *I* like to get somewhere all alone once in a while, too; and have a good spell of thinkin’, and not have nobody come to plague me. It *reely* made me feel so dreadful bad, I thought I should have cried, old *womern* as I be, when the gals moved away the trunk that sot behind the bed, where I used to set and look out o’ the *winder*, and meditate. It seemed as though there wasn’t a spot under the sun left that I could feel at home in. I ‘spose you feel jest so, Sally; so I won’t bother you. Good night.’

The good old creature has gone. Now, sweet Solitude, art thou truly here? Shall I address thee once more? Alas!

'An' surely, Miss Sarah, there's a swate purty jintleman and lady waitin' to the door to see ye, that says they can't be stopping a minit! Plase do be a coming down before me, and not let 'em see me agin, for I was jist cleaning up the supper, and the dishcloth's in the hands of me yet.'

Faithful Bridget! I come! Farewell to the hope of silent thoughts, of wonderful imaginings; and to *thee*, Solitude! a long farewell! SALLY.

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## THE FACTORY GIRL.

"OH, how perfectly beautiful every thing is, to-night!" exclaimed Flora Herbert, as she sat, with thoughtful brow and earnest eye, at the open window of her room, which commanded an extensive view of the surrounding country. A brick building was in front, that extended the length of the street, from which many lights were glimmering; and the mingled hum of merry voices arose, blended, now and then, with the joyous laugh of some light-hearted being, and the low plaintive song from some sadder one. The continued passing on the pavement below gave to the scene a lively air. To the right was the canal, neatly walled up, and enclosed with a white fence, near which a row of trees had been set, that flourished in the luxuriant soil, and gave promise in time to shade the railway that ran beneath to the factory yard. Beyond were the factories and yard with its brick and gravelled walks, its grass plats and flower-beds. Farther on, across the Merrimack, were heights dotted with white dwellings, and, in the distance, a small school-house. There was the academy and boarding-house surrounded by trees; and still farther up, a large thrifty-looking farm-house, its gray sides all bathed in moonlight. Down the river was a part of the forest, that in days "lang syne" the red man called his own; but *he* was no longer there. The tangled wildwood remained undisturbed by his footfall; those dim old forest aisles were unbroken by his shrill whoop; his eye no longer sparkled with delight, as he saw in the changing foliage around him the workings of the Great and Good SPIRIT. Now, as then, the beautiful variegated forest lights the eye, and pale-eyed Luna, with her lovely retinue of burning stars, looks softly and sweetly down.

Flora gazed long on these, her whole soul wrapt in thought. To her, the past, like a funeral train, went slowly and sadly by. Dimly a half-remembered face gazed lovingly on her, and a pale thin hand twined her silken locks. Then came the hearse, the pall, the rattling of earth on the coffin, and the low sad tones of the silver-haired minister, as with choked and broken voice he commended the orphans to the care of the Father of the fatherless. Then the half-remembered dream of leaving the vine-clad cottage, and the heart-breaking grief for a never-to-be-forgotten brother. The thrilling tones of tenderness of that brother, as he strained her to his bosom, and wept over her burning tears, calling her his own poor little motherless one. Again she saw the new home, the good minister and his gentle wife who welcomed them, and the blue-eyed Mira that twined her dimpled arms around her neck, and kissed her, and called her sister. And the bright hours that flew over them as years rolled onward were all her



own once more. The moonlight ramble by the sparkling fountain, whose waters seemed like things of life and flashed like pearls on the dark jagged rocks below. Again she heard the voice of that brother as he spoke of God and Heaven, and pointed to those pure worlds on high. She saw undimmed the light of Mira's eye, as she hung in breathless silence on Earnest's arm, and drank in every uttered word. Again she seemed to listen as he gave out the hymn, and breathed out the deep earnest prayer; again the low tone, that swelled out deep and clear till it thrilled every soul in that vast assembly, as he depicted in glowing terms the Savior's dying love. The story of His meek, gentle life, His sublime and triumphant death greeted her ear like a long-remembered dream. Then came the thought of that brother's passage to the tomb; the hectic on his cheek, the unearthly light of his dark eye, the tottering step, the death struggle and the prayer, which even the last mortal agony could not suppress, that went up from his pale quivering lips for that more than orphaned sister; the heart-bursting agony of the last parting from that cold form; and then the leaving of that cherished spot for a stranger's home; the entrance to a boarding-house, and the beginning of a factory life; the strange faces; the curious glances bestowed on the stranger; the unceasing toil, and the home-sickness that came over her, till her full heart found vent in tears. All these, with their varied memories, passed in review before her, and she murmured,

"Oh, Earnest! I am a very child to-night; and I would that this weary form reposed as silently and sweetly as thine own."

Flora Herbert was an orphan. Her father, the noble and generous Capt. Herbert, perished at sea, and the mother faded and drooped like a sweet flower nipped by untimely frost, and died regretted by all, leaving Flora but four years of age, and Earnest ten. The kind-hearted Mr. Elmore took the homeless ones to his house, and treated them as his own. He marked the precocious talents of little Earnest, and resolved to educate him for the ministry, and well was he repaid by the rapid progress of the young student. He prosecuted his studies, which were in accordance with his naturally thoughtful mind, now subdued by the death of a beloved mother, with untiring perseverance, and at the age of twenty entered the gospel ministry, an earnest and truthful advocate for the crucified Redeemer. "None knew him but to love," and none heard that voice, as it breathed so fervently the sublime truths of Christianity, but went again and again to hear the eloquent teachings. But the star of that young herald was destined to go out ere it reached its zenith. Flora was like her brother—possessing the same dreamy eyes, the same glossy hair, that fell in wavy folds from her high forehead. Her form was light and delicate—too much so for constant toil. Yet she felt it her duty to labor, and no place presented itself so feasible as the factory. She thought of it long, and hesitated to leave her kind friends; but the death of Mrs. Elmore decided her in this preference. The parting from the kind-hearted minister, who had cherished her as a second daughter, was indeed painful; and from Mira, who had shared her every thought and wish, O it was almost more than she could bear; but she nerved herself for the trial, and went forth in the world alone.

We find her, after the lapse of three years, at the open window, thoroughly wearied in mind and body. The fell destroyer, that had laid her mother low, and her youthful brother in the grave, had already wound his

form around her vitals. The bright green leaves, all save those of the pine and fir, had faded and fallen to the earth; shorn of beauty, they lay in the pathway, and rustled to the passing foot, or were borne by the wind circling through the frosty air. Beautiful were they in their decay. Eloquent heralds of man's sure passage to that better world, where "the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." Flora, with a feeling of sadness akin to pleasure, watched their gradual decay. In them she saw a type of her own brief life; and as the last ones fell with a low rustling sound, leaving their parent branches bare, she laid her down to die. Death had no terrors to her. He came clothed in robes of purity, to lead her willing spirit home. The flowery pathway, all radiant with untold glories, burst on her enraptured vision; and, confiding in a Father's love, she trod with unfaltering steps the dark valley of shadows. The hour of her departure had come. She lay with her thin pale hands clasped together, and the "rose of death" beamed brightly on her cheek. A holy stillness reigned around as the good and beautiful went to rest. Anna Ellis, a sweet young girl, sat with her in the chamber of death. There was no fear in that hour to her. She knew that a pure spirit was going home, and silently she watched its upward flight. The dim light of the night lamp grew fainter and fainter as the morning rays that slowly crept along, fell on the cheek of the dying girl. The mellow light, for a moment, recalled the fluttering spirit, and she murmured, "Anna, dear Anna, lift my head that I may look out once more on the fair young earth." O! I have so loved, almost so idolatry, those beautiful stars. How calmly they look down upon us now, with all their sweet solemn influence. Soon my spirit will be soaring above them, and they will shine sweetly on my grave. "Anna, it is sweet to die at such an hour as this. Through life it has been my cherished wish to fade as calmly out from life at this hour, as they fade from the morning sky." She ceased to speak, her head drooped on Anna's bosom, her "gentle spirit grew mute and folded its wings," and Anna was alone with the dead. The morning dawned, and merry were the peals of the many bells that called to labor.

The girls gathered around the breakfast table. A sadness hung upon all, and few words were spoken; they felt that death was in their midst; and the thought came swelling up, "I too may die among strangers, with no kindred near." Flora was borne to the cemetery of —, and many were the tearful faces that came to pay the last tribute of respect to one whom they had learned to love. One by one they passed around the coffin, and the tears fell faster as they gazed upon that face, so calm, so peaceful in its death-sleep. A smile lingered on the slightly parted lips; and the dark glossy hair lay in waves back from the high transparent forehead. Anna came last, with clasped hands, and gazed long, and turned sobbing away. The lid was closed, the pall thrown over the coffin, and the sleeper was borne to her rest.

Two weeks after, as the girls were seated at the dinner table, a traveling equipage drove to the door, and an elderly gentleman of noble mien alighted, and handed out a young girl, clad in deep mourning. It was Mr. Elmore and his daughter, who had just returned from a southern clime, and received intelligence of Flora's death. The old man wept as he pressed the hand of the youthful Anna, and blessed her for her kindness to the stranger. "I loved her as my own," he said, "and why did I not know that she was dying. Alas! while I sought to restore one cherished



one with balmy air beneath a southern sky, the other drooped, a fragile flower, and died, but "THY will, not mine, O merciful FATHER, be done."

The remains of Flora were removed and placed beside her brother, in a lovely spot near the waterfall, their chosen retreat in early days. And, when spring mantled the earth, a tuft of purple-eyed violets, and the sweet (scented) briar grew together over their graves. At the holy twilight hour Mira, with a pale cheek and sad step, repairs thither, to commune with the departed. Unsought, she had loved as woman only can love, with a deep and fathomless tenderness. In her every thought and wish for happiness, a noble form and dark thrilling eye had shared a part. And when that form was stricken down, that eye closed in death, and Earnest borne to his grave, her heart was buried with him there.

He had not known the depth of that affection. It was too sacred to be revealed, and lived unspoken, within the holy of holies of her heart. No other love for a moment ever cast a shadow there, for this was of too high, too pure an order ever to be effaced.

J. L. B.

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## THE VISIONS OF LIFE.

O, THE beautiful forms that walk  
In the vista of Fancy's eye;  
O, the beautiful beings of light that talk  
When no other beings are nigh.

They have come from the mossy glen  
Where the fairies form their rings,  
And they've brought us many a precious gem  
From the tips of their golden wings.

They have come in an angel's form  
To divest us of cankering care;  
And they've sent away, on the back of the storm,  
And stolen the rainbow there.

Though at times they may lead astray  
The heart, with their siren song,  
They are true to their trust, "it is only their way"—  
They never premeditate wrong.

Their iris hues are seen  
In the glow of a sunset sky;  
But the fairest visions often teem  
From the depth of a lover's eye.

They inspire each cherished shape  
With a bright angelic mien,  
Till the dead into breathing figures wake,  
O, call it not a dream.

They make the barren soul  
Put forth like the prophet's rod;  
And they point us away to the shining goal,  
Where the angels dwell with God.

M. R. G.

## A FRAGMENT.

\* \* \* \* I stood by her bedside. Her face—that beautiful face upon which I had so often gazed with love and admiration, was deathly pale; her fine dark eyes were closed, and her hands were meekly folded upon her breast. So still—so calm was all around, that for a moment I thought the spirit of the fair and gifted being before me, had already winged its flight to the regions of eternal bliss. I knelt by her side, took her hand in mine, and long and fervently implored that if it was the will of God, the life of my dearest earthly friend might be spared, and if not, that I might have grace to support me in my hour of need.

I bent over her and gently whispered her name. She opened her eyes and gazed upon me for some moments in silence, but the sweet seraphic smile that beamed upon her countenance, was more eloquent than the most impassioned language could have been.

“Mary! my own dear Mary,” she at length exclaimed, “I thank My HEAVENLY FATHER that my prayer has been heard, and that I am permitted to behold you once more. I can now depart in peace. Oh! I longed for this; it seemed as if I could not die without bidding you farewell.—Nay, dearest!” added she, observing my emotion, “do not weep for me. I wish it were so ordered that we might depart together; nevertheless, not my will be done, but the will of HIM that sent me. I love this beautiful earth, with its sunshine and flowers—with its blue skies—its silvery streams, its grassy vales and lofty mountains; but above all, I love it for the noble and gifted ones who tread its daily paths. But if it is sweet to commune with beloved ones here, how much sweeter will it be in Heaven. We must part; but we will soon meet again in that sun-bright land where sorrow and tears can never come.” Her voice grew more tremulous and low; she pressed my hand to her heart, its throbbings grew fainter and fainter. She threw her arms around my neck, kissed me, murmured my name, and her pure spirit returned to God who gave it.

I did not weep. My grief was too great for tears, but I knelt by the side of the holy dead, and prayed that I might die. My wild and sinful prayer was not granted. I remember standing by an open grave—of seeing a coffin lowered, and hearing the minister pronounce these solemn words—“Earth to earth, and dust to dust,”—more I remember not—reason fled. \* \* \* \*

It is now three years since the death of my dear Ellen, and I am convinced that my hours are numbered. But death has no terrors for me. I long for the time to come when I shall be summoned to cast aside this garment of clay, and meet my beloved friend in Heaven. M. A. F.



## EDITORIAL.

CONCLUSION OF THE VOLUME. In bringing these labors to a conclusion, we can hardly ourselves realize that this is our "valedictory address." But of one thing we strive to feel fully sensible, that this only opportunity must be improved to refute as far as possible, all erroneous ideas with regard to "the factory girls and their magazine."

Once more, then, with regard to the operatives. We have endeavored to place them, in the estimation of the distant and uninformed, upon a level with other New England females. They are not a class by themselves—they have very little clanish feeling—they come from other parts of New England, stay here awhile, and then return to their early homes. The New England school girl, as portrayed upon our title page, grows up with the influences of the church, the school-house, the manufactory, and the labors of the industrious around her. From some or all of these her mind derives its hues, and thus she is generally intelligent, religious and industrious.

But, to describe her more particularly, we must remind our readers of the New England country homestead, of the farmer "well-to-do in the world," so long as he is faithful and diligent. But he has no wealth to distribute among his children. They must make their fortunes or their livelihoods, as he has done, by their own exertions. Early in life is this necessity impressed upon their minds, and perhaps too early are parental restraints and guardianship cast aside, and the homestead left for the busy, tempting and dangerous scenes of active life.

We will glance for a moment at the fortunes of such a farmer's daughters; and we will suppose there are half-a-dozen of them.

The eldest is, from the necessity of the case, taught in her childhood to "mind the house." She is assistant nurse, dairy-maid, cook, laundress and sempstress, and grows up "careful and troubled about many things." Her ideas and affections concentrate in her home—she takes little interest in the world without, excepting as it affects the interests of those immediately about her. Care, toil and exposure rob her of what she might once have possessed of beauty, and she becomes a "homely old maid;" yet, in her own circle, useful, honored and beloved.

The second daughter is a nice and dextrous sempstress, and has much taste. Her sister's industry allows her leisure, and, with some little assistance, she becomes the village milliner and mantua-maker. The third daughter is, at some little expense, sent from home, and learns to be a "tailoress." She rises early, and sits late at her hard task, which it may be is daily preceded and followed by a long tedious walk from her home to the families in which she labors.

The fourth grows up with more love of study than her elder sisters. She is, perhaps, also more delicate in physical appearance, and they wish to spare her the hardships of their lives. The spare funds of the family are made into a little purse, and she is sent away to some noted school. She becomes the village school-teacher, or perhaps a preceptress in her own or a distant section of the country.

The fifth grows up. She does not love study, or does not see the practicability of indulging a predilection for it—she has seen all the little annoyances to which her older sisters are subject, and wishing to avoid those, she looks to the factory as offering inducements for a few years of labor, with perhaps some ulterior prospect in view. She will return and be married; or she will educate herself with the money she may lay aside from her wages; or she will go to the West; or set up a little dry goods establishment in her native town, or anything, rather than stay there always. It may be that her hopes are never fulfilled. She may lose her health, or she may marry here, or she may find long years pass away, and her inclination for some other employment fail, or that her means seem never sufficient for the original design.

The youngest daughter becomes the successor of some one of her sisters, or she remains, a pet and assistant in the household, until she marries.

These girls have all been educated under the same influences, and the "factory girl" feels that she is still with her sisters. She has not fallen into another and lower class. She takes much pains to inform herself, and "keep up her respectability;" and they all feel that, so long as she retains her self-respect and upright character, she has neither degraded herself, nor those connected with her.

But not from a family like this are all of our operatives. It may be that within a few rods of this comfortable farmer's dwelling, is the dilapidated hovel of a poor, shiftless, or intemperate laborer. His children grow up half-fed and half-clad, and dependent for their few necessities upon their benevolent neighbors. The good clergyman's wife ascertains that the eldest is a strong, capable girl, and takes her into her family, to assist in rearing those "blessings," which are often a country minister's frequent and only treasures. At the age of eighteen, she is dismissed by the worthy matron for some more profitable service. With a small stock of clothing, partly new and partly "second hand," from the good dame, she comes to Lowell. She has also a trunk, a bandbox and umbrella, and a very few books. She has been to school whenever she could possibly be spared, and has received most excellent moral culture. Her next younger sister has not been so fortunate. She has been "maid-of-all-work" at the village tavern. At the age of eighteen she also is dismissed, and follows her sister to the factory. But she is ignorant, bold, wilful, of violent and unchastened temper, and perhaps only restrained from depravity by her good sister, and the stern discipline to which she is subjected. Though not vile, neither is she really virtuous. She is impudent to her overseers, troublesome to her landlady, an annoyance to her fellow-boarders, and a bad example to those still younger, and as careless as herself. She is perhaps turned away from her boarding-house for rude conduct, or lying, or stealing from her companions, and this leads to expulsion from the mill. Or it may be that she is first expelled from the mills. She has stolen there, or been impudent to her overseers, or disobeyed some of the factory regulations, for she has never been amenable to restraint, and now she "wont mind the old corporation rules, no! that she wont!" She changes her name, but not her character, and goes to some other place, to enact again the same wickedness—and at length some dark catastrophe closes the scene.

Her elder sister has been diligent, and successful in her plans. She has watched over the fortunes of the little ones, and prevented their becoming victims to the unhappy influences which have ruined their sister.

We will now suppose two other characters from the same village. The minister dies; he leaves no property, and the feeble widow is dependent upon her children. The eldest daughter wishes to engage in some profitable employment, for a few years, that she may assist to educate the younger children. She has no friends but their good parishioners, who have little but sympathy to bestow. She remembers the good girl who was their domestic in her childhood, and after consulting her upon the advantages of the employment, she also enters the factory.

The village merchant fails, and goes to "the West," leaving his family to shift for a time for themselves. The girls, after many misgivings, tears, and regrets, go to the factory, hoping for the happier time when they shall all be reunited in a new home.

Such are some of the different characters who meet and mingle here. It will be perceived that some are capable of exerting a happy influence upon those with whom they will associate, and that others may be the "bane and trial" of all about them. No parent should ever permit a young girl to come to this city without placing her in charge of some one of more experience, who will watch over and counsel her. There are no rules here so strict, and no surveillance so close, as to render ill conduct impossible. But when a young girl is sent here without any friend or adviser, her relatives are either very careless, or so utterly unfit themselves to have the charge of a young female, that she is quite as secure among strangers.

And now, what are those peculiar circumstances of factory life which must, in some degree, exert a modifying influence upon the characters of all those subjected to them? Females who come here find that they will be respected, if they respect themselves. They find here lectures, institutes, religious associations and social conventions open to them. They are met and treated according to their worth. This cherishes elevation of character where it exists, and often inspires it in those who were deficient.

The regularity and security of their payments all must acknowledge to be an advantage who have had experience in business where this is not the case. The freedom from care, the certainty of employment, and the neatness of the work, all concur to make the employment pleasant.

The pleasures of social communion are well appreciated by those who have formerly lived where there was no choice of associates, and often draw and keep operatives here when no other inducement would be sufficient to secure their continuance.



These, and others incidentally recognized in our tales, fragments, and so forth, are the advantages of factory life. But there are also its counterbalancing disadvantages.

Wherever the manufacturing system is known the length of its "working-day" is spoken of in terms of denunciation, regret, or apology. Its mitigations are these: the labor is not excessive—that is, it does not tax the strength, although, if long continued, it must tax the powers of endurance of the operative.

There are some divisions of the labor which allow the operative to retire several hours before "the wheel is stopped." We refer to dressers, warpers, drawers-in, harness-knitters, cloth-room girls, etc. Carders do not work so long as spinners and weavers. And these latter, by exchange of work, or giving up their own to a "spare hand," can avail themselves sometimes of an absence. In case of sickness, they can of course stop their work. Saturday evenings the mills are never "lighted up," and this in winter gives a goodly proportion of one week day to the operative. When these circumstances are taken into consideration, with the fact that most of the girls work here but few years, and that quite a majority make long annual visits to their friends in the country, it will readily be conceded that with proper care health need not be lost. This proper care is taken by very few of the girls. Some are too ambitious, some too covetous, some too thoughtless, some too ignorant, and some, doubtless, too poor to purchase all they need to preserve them from wet and cold—too poor because parents, children, or other relatives may be dependent upon their wages for support.

The confinement is another evil—one which unhappily admits of no remedy but that of high rooms, as well ventilated as the nature of the work will allow.

An unkind or negligent overseer is another possible evil—for although nothing like corporal punishment could be inflicted in an American factory, yet all can imagine that a harsh or arbitrary disposition could make itself felt by looks, words, or decided neglect. We have known as much pain to be caused here by a hasty or unjust word, as could have resulted from a blow where such treatment was known. Yet we believe the overseers here to be generally very kind, well-disposed men. Some of them are even as fathers and brothers to the females under their charge. And where an absolute quarrel arises between an overseer and one of his help—a quarrel in which the girl is not favored by the superintendent, we believe herself to be in fault. Girls with unregulated feelings are more common here than men who would be unjust and unkind to females under their care.

But the "premium" system has its modifying influence upon the overseers. As we understand it, premiums are awarded to those overseers who accomplish most in a given time, or at the least expense. That is, the weave-room overseer who has sent out the most cloth—difference of texture being accounted for—at the least expense of spare help, etc., is entitled to a premium; and he who is "next best" to a second premium, and so on. This is a beneficial system, so far as it tends to make the overseers faithful in their attendance, and ready always to repair a loom, mend a break-out, change a beam, or sew a band, with as little delay as possible. But when it leads to impatient or unkind feelings towards the slow or sickly girl, and makes favorites of the strong and dextrous, the other operatives have cause to regret the premium system. We have known tears to be caused by the sharp look of an overseer, who told a girl to "fly round, and mind her work," when she was doing the best she could with an aching head or hand.

Another evil has been permitted by the lack of firmness, or want of strict principle of the overseers—though this is now obviated, we believe, as far as possible in the construction of the looms—the difference in the thickness of the cloth. We will explain ourself more precisely by stating that we once took an overseer's microscope or counting-glass and examined the cloth of a girl who was too conscientious to take a wrench stealthily from the overseer's drawer, and loosen the screws of her loom. We then went to the loom of a "favorite," and found the difference to be one in ten—that is, one web counted nine threads where the other counted ten—one girl was paid six cents per day—or nine, if she had three looms—more than the other, for nothing—or rather for a dishonesty that was winked at.

Selfishness we have often thought to be a vice increased, if not engendered, by factory life. Where all are so isolated, so self-dependent, and so liable to be jostled by the bold and overbearing from their proper places, the degrading motto, "Take care of Number One" is too much regarded. Those, who elsewhere are the kind, forbearing and generous, sometimes seem almost to change their natures in a factory or boarding-house. We have known those whose "characters" were unim-

peachable, who were truthful, devout, and benevolent so far as public charities were concerned, to exhibit disgusting selfishness in the mill—to pout at an overseer for attending to another girl's work first, whose right it was to receive the precedence of this attention, to monopolize the size brushes, and snatch and hide away bobbins when they were scarce, and in many ways show that they had forgotten the injunction, "Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you," or conceived that it could have no reference to factory life.

And in their boarding-houses some are too apt to yield to feelings of envy, ill-will, and detraction. Scandal is wickedly propagated, and harsh feeling indulged. We remember hearing of a widow who wished to carpet and furnish a room for herself upon the corporation, for she had now no other home than a boarding-house, and wished to make her apartment in that as pleasant as possible. She did it, but so much uneasiness was created in the house by the idea that she was enjoying what they did not possess, that she was obliged to leave the house. And this was not the only instance where envy has brought about a similar result.

Fault-finding, with no occasion, or a slight one which should be overlooked, is not uncommon. Girls will come from homes where "alimentiveness is the organ most cultivated," where they have been brought up to think people should "live to eat, and not eat to live," and, not finding here all the delicacies to which they have been accustomed, they forget that these must be abandoned for the city wages, and behave at table in a most rude and unreasonable manner.

Said a boarding woman to us one day, "My girls made an outrageous bluster one noon about their dinner. I was weary of their clamor, and, without saying one word to them, slipped out of my back-door to the counting-room, and called in the superintendent. The squire came, began to carve, and as the rich juices followed the knife he told them to let him hear no more of complaint. He should be glad if he could find a piece of meat like that upon his table when he should go home to dine." The complaint was, that the meat was not sufficiently cooked to suit them, and the fault that it was too violently urged. We have heard of bold selfish girls, who, if there was a rarity upon the table, would divide it among themselves, and let the stranger, or the more gentle, go without.

We have heard of these things. They are probably as true as the more noble and lovely traits of character which we have portrayed, and we have related them because these are the girls who complain that we "do not tell all the story"—we are "one-sided." If we have often written of the good and the noble, it was because those characters were more pleasant to dwell upon—because we thought *they* might be allured to like goodness by the good example.

It is a truth that the injunctions of Christianity are not carried into the details of life, of factory life, as they should be. There are very many of the good, of the kind, and unselfish, but theirs is a harder lot than if there were more. They suffer and struggle where there might be sympathy and alleviation.

Had the number of our mill subscribers been greater, we might have treated of these subjects more frequently and minutely. But those who were our patrons needed not our advice or counsel. And those who might have profited, were the class who would not heed us.

We are happy in the belief that a work upon "The Rights and Duties of Factory Operatives" will ere long be issued from the Boston press, and we hope that mothers, sisters, guardians and friends will circulate it as a gift-book among their factory acquaintance.

Another evil, to which factory girls may possibly be subjected, is, that of "flirtation," or insincere courtship. There are hundreds of young men in Lowell, as shop-tenders, etc., who look upon the thousands of mill operatives in nearly the light in which the Creoles of Louisiana, and the grisettes of Paris, are regarded. Without one spark of principle, or just or kind feeling, they visit and gain the affections of simple unsuspecting country girls. And when it is remembered that these girls are afar from fathers and brothers, that they are ignorant of the gallantries, and even of the courtesies of city gentlemen, that they are young, guileless, and confiding, it may be imagined that much unhappiness—to use the gentlest term—is the result. This is a delicate subject for a young female to treat upon, but what benevolence and duty dictate, delicacy most surely will tolerate.

We do not allude to those errors where both are equally guilty, where there is no confidence betrayed; where there was no fall, because there was no elevation of character. But a simple, guileless, perhaps vain and pretty, country girl may



easily be misled by attentions, which in her own rustic home would only have been dictated by an honorable desire to win her affections. The wrong may go no further than the injury inflicted upon the affections, but it is no consolation to a heart writhing in the wretchedness of unrequited love, to hear that *he* "never meant any thing," "never thought of any serious attachment," "didn't intend to marry any one," "is very sorry for her," but advises her to place her affections upon some one more worthy of them, or to seek the aid of religion, philosophy, good sense, pride, spite, or anything that may support.

She who has been subjected to a trial like this can never be as she has been before. She may seek consolation from the true source, and be henceforth more strong, more wary and firm-hearted, than ever; but the trustfulness of her nature has forever passed away.

Yet too often may folly, crime and ruin be the termination of an attachment, innocently formed by a confiding girl for an unprincipled man. Between these it is not "diamond cut diamond"—the frail one may be warned, but she believes the testimony of her senses, which tell her that she is beloved, and of her own heart which admits of no doubt or suspicion. She may hear of those who have been deceived, but, if she hears of many, she still believes that she shall be an exception.

And if she falls through too strong affection, or too much confidingness, how wide the gulf between herself and her companion in sin. He may go on unrepenting and unreprieved; but though she may look back upon her past innocence, with the deepest remorse that she has forfeited its treasures, yet her repentance in the eyes of society availeth little. She may look forward to the paths of the virtuous with yearnings which were never felt before, but if she walk in them it must be alone. The strong, or the unttempted, fear, shun and condemn her, and for associates she must seek the thoughtless and degraded.

Society commits a great mistake in making its broad distinction between the error or guilt of two who have thus offended.

But we would not frighten our readers with the belief that these things are frequent, and that the happy marriages, of which they hear so much among our youthful population, are unfrequent. It is not so; but we fear that the present tendency is to a worse rather than a better state of things. Superintendents, boarding-house keepers, and guardian sisters and friends, have need to be vigilant.

Another evil, but one not peculiar to our city, or to factory life, is the quantity of pernicious reading which is in circulation. There are publications which foster a love of low, miserable gossip, and also a spirit of anarchy, arrogance and presumption—which are filled with a wretched cant, peculiar to themselves, although affecting to eschew all cant. It was said to be an axiom in monarchies, that "the king can do no wrong," and these pseudo teachers would imply that *the laborer can do no wrong*—would inculcate the belief that the sweat of the brow is a holy baptism, cleansing from all sin.

Boldness has been complained of as a fault in some of our operatives. This arises from self-confidence, the result of self-dependence, unchecked and unsoftened by culture or native refinement.

There is no remedy for all this but education for the young, and consistency of character and conduct among those already educated. Too true is it that those, who are looked up to as "having authority," cannot always be looked up to for example, or even precept. But this is little excuse for the erring, for here the broad distinctions between right and wrong are universally known, the great truths of Christianity are freely taught.

But enough of this for our readers. We have looked long and sadly upon the dark side. Our friends will understand why we thought it necessary to give the shadow with the shine. And we must draw this long valedictory to a close. Our editorial labors are now to cease. They have generally been pleasant duties, and the sweet remembrances of kind words which have been given—of valuable acquaintances which have been made—of an interchange of sympathies with those who are otherwise unknown—of knowledge that we have acquired, and notice received—all these are ours as treasures for after life. Many of our patrons we know through kind visits or letters. We will love to think of them; and should any circumstances, a increase of ability, or revival of hope, to do good, again bring us, or our magazine, before the public, we will seek their acquaintance.

Our contributors we would not forget in this leave-taking. They have been a small part of the great whole which is comprised by our operatives, but their influ-

ence has been felt far and wide. They have been faithful, kind and valued friends to us, and we trust that the friendships thus formed may ever continue. And now we will give place to one in whose explanations, regrets and benison we heartily unite.

HARRIET FARLEY.

TO THE PUBLIC. Two years have elapsed since we, in connection with our associate, assumed the control of the "LOWELL OFFERING." We then pledged ourselves that it should "continue devoid of all *sectarianism*;" and we did not use the word merely in a religious point of view. We meant all questions wherein men *sincerely* differ respecting the *means* of promoting the one great end—the good of mankind—whether in philosophy, politics, or religion. And we did trust to go on our way without giving offence to any, and without involving ourselves, or magazine, in the thousand and one questions which are exciting the public mind. But, be it as it is: we have no disposition to quarrel with others. They may go their way, and we would humbly crave the privilege of going quietly ours. Yet this has been denied us. Politicians and reformers would drag us into the arena of disputed questions, and because we have refused to obey their behests, and by our conduct implied that we understood our own feelings best, we have been abused, our magazine belied, and our honesty and principles maligned.

To those who have done so, we have nothing to say. If they have been honest in their conduct, we sincerely believe them actuated by a fatal spirit of radicalism, which may destroy, but never can elevate. And if they have been incited by impure motives, may they see and repent of their errors. It was not our purpose to devote our magazine to the debate of questions, over which we have no influence, and of evils which, if complained of, it was not in our power to remedy. We started with no lance or spear to fight battles, not even our own—our aim was "to elevate the humble, and show that good might come out even of Nazareth." That we have accomplished something of our intention, we believe from the words of kindness and commendation, which have been bestowed upon the Offering from every section of our own country, as well as the hearty sympathy expressed for our enterprise in foreign lands. For this kindness, encouragement, approbation and patronage, we take the present opportunity to return our heart-felt thanks. Not one word of sympathy, nor an act of kindness, but is treasured deep within a heart which *never forgets*. And may it all be returned with usury to those who have bestowed it upon us; and like the gentle dew of evening, bring freshness to their own souls when parched by sorrow and affliction.

And may we be pardoned for taking the present time for stating explicitly, that *individually* we have no sentiments or sympathies in unison with that spirit which would reform its neighbor and leave its own heart the abode of every bitter, malignant passion—which devotes so much time to hunting the mote in a brother's eye, that it has no time to find the beam in its own, and which publishes upon the folds of its banner, that its aim is, to *level*, not to elevate. We would not pull down the superior to the position of the more humble, but would raise the humble to the elevation of the superior. And this, we feel assured, can never be done but by the moral means of education, and the all-pervading influence of true Christianity.

But to us it does seem that most of the leaders in all questions of reform, are actuated by a spirit diametrically opposite to the teachings of Him "who taught as a God"—that they mistake denunciation and abuse for reproof, and exhibit a spirit as much to be grieved over as the errors which they denounce.

Throughout the wide world there is wrong, injustice and oppression; and we have no hope but it will remain so, until sin and selfishness have ceased. But will injustice and unkindness beget love and equity? Are *these* reformers pure? Are their garments unspotted? And are they not exhibiting the very spirit which only lacks the power to become the very axle of anarchy and tyranny.

But we seek no discussion. We would not use the columns of our magazine as an expositor of our own peculiar views; and what *we* would not *take*, certainly could not be claimed as a matter of justice by others.

But the parting hour has come. We discontinue the publication of the Offering because— But our reasons are entirely of a private nature—those in which *the public* are not interested. And for us only remains to add the parting benison:—FRIENDS, PATRONS, and FOES, (if we have any,) MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL with every perfect gift. ADIEU.

HARRIOT F. CURTIS.



